

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 15 with the following rewritten paragraph:

When a request is routed to server farm 116a via the Internet 114, the front-end http server ~~120~~ 118 receives and parses the request in order to, among other things, determine to which application server the request should be dispatched for servicing. The URL or other information contained within a client request typically indicates the type of request (e.g., check out) and thus will dictate to which server group in a server farm a particular request must be routed. The aforementioned is an example of the “content-based” aspect of routing a request to a particular, appropriate, server group in a server farm. Within a server group, however, a request can be serviced by any one of the clones within that server group. Accordingly, the front-end http server ~~120~~ 118 also must also make a determination as to which server clone in the determined server group a request should be dispatched. Accordingly, a front-end http server such as server ~~120~~ 118 typically will include a load balancer software module for choosing one of the multiple clones in a server group based on a multiplicity of factors.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 19 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Figure 2 is a flowchart illustrating a load balancing configuration/reconfiguration operation in accordance with at least one preferred embodiment of the present invention. It is merely exemplary and many other embodiments are possible and would be apparent to those of skill ~~and~~ in the art. In step 100, the load balancer is initialized by manually inputting the address information of all of the servers in the server farm. This includes their cluster address (their external Internet Protocol address) as well as the individual server addresses within the cluster. Flow then proceeds to step 102 where each server defined in the initialization process will be individually polled for its configuration file assuming there are servers that have not yet been polled, process flows from step 102 to step 104. Of course, after the last server has been polled, the process simply flows from step 102 to step 118 where the process is terminated.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 18 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The load balancer then waits for a reply. In step 108, it determines whether it received a proper reply or a “HTTP/1.0 404 not found” reply. If it receives a 404 reply, flow proceeds to step 116 where the load balancer generates an error report and stores it in an error log in its memory. Flow then returns to step ~~104~~ 102 to determine whether there are any other servers that need to be polled.